

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03 PM-07 NSC-07 SS-20

L-03 DRC-01 /107 W

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R 202148Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8653

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 2747

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, SOCI

SUBJ: ANOTHER BISHOP SPEAKS OUT

REF: (A) SANTIAGO 2212; (B) SANTIAGO 2656

1. SUMMARY. BISHOP OF LA SERENA HAS ISSUED PASTORAL LETTER WHICH WHILE CONSIDERABLY LESS PRO-JUNTA AND ANTI-MARXIST THAN THAT OF VALPARAISO'S ARCHBISHOP TAGLE NEVERTHELESS DIFFERS SIGNIFICANTLY FROM APRIL 24 STATEMENT OF CHILEAN BISHOPS. END SUMMARY.

2. PRO-GOVT MEDIA CONTINUE TO HARP ON PASTORAL LETTER OF VALPARAISO'S ARCHBISHOP TAGLE READ IN CHURCHES OF HIS ARCH-DIOCESE ON SUNDAY, MAY 19 (REFTEL B). GOVT MOUTHPIECE LA PATRIA AGAIN FRONTPAGED THE STATEMENT ON MAY 18. IN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED PREVIOUS DAY, CHILEAN AIR FORCE CINC AND JUNTA MEMBER GENERAL LEIGH TOLD EL MERCURIO THAT GOVT APPRECIATED TAGLE'S STATEMENT AND FELT THAT IT REPRESENTED THINKING OF MANY CHRISTIAN CHILEANS WHO DESIRE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION BUT WHO CANNOT DISCOUNT MARXIST THREAT AGAINST ESTABLISHED GOVT. CHARGE THAT MARXISM GREAT ENEMY OF RECONCILIATION AND THAT CARDINAL NAIVE OR WORSE FOR NOT RECOGNIZING THAT DANGER APPEARING WITH SOME REGULARITY
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IN SANTIAGO LETTERS-TO-THE-EDITOR COLUMNS

3. MEANWHILE BISHOP FRANCISCO FRESNO OF LA SERENA (ABOUT 300 MILES NORTH OF SANTIAGO), HAS ISSUED HIS OWN STATEMENT WHICH WILL FURTHER ASSIST THE GOVT'S INTENT TO UNDERCUT CHURCH CRITICISM. FRESNO'S STATEMENT DIFFERS SIGNIFICANTLY FROM TAGLE'S IN THAT HE DOES NOT PORTRAY MARXISM AS THE GREATEST STUMBLING BLOCK TO NATIONAL RECONCILIATION BUT RATHER REFERS TO WELL-KNOWN VICES OF EXCESSIVE EGOISM, HATRED, ETC. AS THE OBSTACLES. AS IN TAGLE'S STATEMENT, HOWEVER, THERE IS NO IMPLICATION THAT GOVT RESPONSIBLE FOR DELAYING NECESSARY RECONCILIATION.

4. TO THE CONTRARY, FRESNO ARGUES THAT RECONCILIATION HAS ALREADY BEGUN AND IS BEING HELPED ALONG BY MANY GOVT POLICIES INCLUDING GRANTING OF LAND TO PEASANTS, FARMING WORKERS' COOPERATIVES, ENCOURAGING LABOR UNIONS TO FUNCTION WITHOUT POLITICAL INTERVENTION, ETC. FRESNO, AS DID TAGLE, COMPLETELY IGNORES THE ISSUE OF GOC HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS WHICH ORIGINALLY PROMPTED THE CHILEAN BISHOPS TO ISSUE THEIR STRONG APRIL 24 STATEMENT (REFTEL A).
POPPER

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 20 MAY 1974
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To: STATE
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